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CENTRAL FAX CENTER

MAR 15 2007

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Remarks

Claims 1-6 and 8-18, inclusive, are under consideration. The indication that claims 12-15 define allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. To that end claims 12 and 13 have been rewritten and are presented in independent form. Claims 14 and 15 depend on claim 13.

Claim 1 is amended to further define a preferred embodiment of the present invention by incorporating therein the limitations of claim 7. Additional support for claim 1 can be found at page 4, lines 10-13 of the specification.

Dependent claims 2-6, 8-12, 16, 17 and 18 are amended to obviate editorial errors and improve readability.

Claim 7 has been deleted as superfluous in view of the present amendments to claim 1.

Inasmuch as the total number of claims is less than 20, and only three (3) of these claims are independent, no additional claim fees are believed to be due.

The rejection of claims 1-7, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Magaldi (WO 97/00406) is not warranted, and is hereby traversed.

Magaldi, at page 10, lines 12-16, unequivocally teaches that water is sprayed onto the bottom part of the belt during forward travel and on the upper part of the belt during return travel. That is, the water spray nozzles are situated to direct the spray onto the belt itself, not onto the traveling continuous bed of hot loose material that is carried by the belt. The anticipation rejection is clearly unwarranted and should be withdrawn.

The rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious in view of Magaldi likewise is not warranted, and is hereby traversed. As pointed out hereinabove, Magaldi teaches that water should be sprayed onto the metal belt to cool it (page 10, lines 13-14).

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There is no teaching or suggestion in Magaldi that the water spray be directed onto the moving bed of material.

Moreover, there is no basis whatsoever for the Examiner's unsupported testimony that the temperature of the plates is representative of the temperature of the material carried by the plates. As a matter of fact, the contrary is indicated by Magaldi at page 10, lines 16-19, where it is stated that the ash temperature is 800°C. and the plate temperature is about 300°-350°C. and by water spray on the plates could be lowered to about 150°-200°C. The express limitations recited in claim 8 are neither shown nor suggested by Magaldi.

The rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Magaldi in view of Bernard et al. (FR 2 731 064) is traversed as well. The attempted combination of references is clearly improper. Magaldi shows a substantially horizontal belt type conveyor whereas Bernard et al. shows an inclined screw type conveyor. Also, Magaldi teaches that spray should be applied directly to the plates. Bernard et al. do not show or suggest that.

Furthermore, no valid inference can be drawn from Fig. 3 of Bernard et al. as to the extent of the spray emanating from nozzle 18.

The rejection of claims 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Magaldi in view of Magaldi II (EP 0 931 981) is also traversed. Claim 16 depends on claim 1 and thus includes all limitations of that particular claim for reasons stated hereinabove vis-a-vis the Magaldi reference. Claims 17 and 18, in turn, depend on claim 16 and are distinguishable over Magaldi for the same reasons. Magaldi II does not cure any of the deficiencies of Magaldi. Magaldi II is directed to a conveyor intended for the promotion of combustion completion, thus it does not show or suggest any means for cooling or quenching of the material carried on belt 18.

As to the air passages in the belt 18, these passages must serve an entirely different purpose, namely promotion of combustion rather than cooling of the material. Accordingly, the volumetric requirements for cooling air passage are entirely different.


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The remainder of cited references, not applied to the claims, have been reviewed with interest. These references neither show nor suggest the presently claimed invention, however.

The present amendments to the claims and the accompanying discussion are deemed to dispose of all issues in this case and to place this application in condition for allowance. Early such action is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

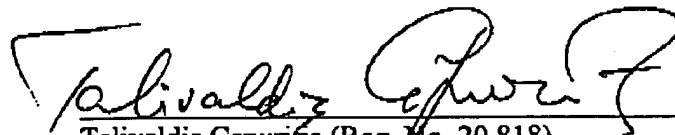
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